BALTIMORE, MD.
NEWS AMERICAN

E. 219,257
S. 313,454

JAN 4 1966

MARIANNE MEANS' WASHINGTON

Attacks on CIA's Boss Weaken Effectiveness of Spy Agency

ONE OF the strangest developments of the year just past was the emergence of the man with the country's most secret job as one of the most talked-about officials in the capital.

MEANS

The head of the Central Intelligence Agency, as the nation's number one super-sleuth, is supposed to be a mysterious and little-known fellow. Yet in the eight months of his tenure as CIA chief Adm. William F. (Red) Raborn Jr. has become a highly controversial and much-discussed figure.

Raborn himself has demonstrated the tight-lipped discipline traditional with the business of spying; he has not spoken a word in public since he was sworn in.

The problem is not what Raborn is saying but what others are saying about him. Several prominent and responsible government officials outside the CIA and some pros inside the agency have such serious doubts about his aptitude for his job that they are voicing their concern openly among their friends and associates.

Raborn had a distinguished naval career and directed the successful Polaris program. His critics contend, however, that he cannot grasp the nuances of complicated international politics and that he is a sloppy administrator away from the military staff system to which he had been accustomed.

ONE administration official says that three days after the U. S. dispatched troops to quell fighting in the Dominican Republic he discussed the crisis with Raborn at a social event. Raborn told the official that the problem in the Dominican Republic was "very simple—just a case of the Communists versus the loyalists."

In fairness to Raborn, it must be noted that he had been sworn into office by President Johnson only the week before the crisis. But the official, a responsible and scholarly man, was shocked that the head of the CIA would display such a lack of sophistication about international politics.

One CIA source declares bitterly that the CIA is rapidly losing influence on U. S. policy to the FBI and to military intelligence because President Johnson is disenchanted with Raborn. He claims this began when Raborn submitted to the President a list of 70 Communists involved in the Dominican uprising. The administration was later embarrassed when the list turned out to have several mistakes, including the duplication of seven names.

Another story from within the CIA illustrates one pro's concern about Raborn's fitness to deal with international problems. This source declares that Raborn referred to Morocco as "a land-locked country" when the Morocco specialist briefed him on CIA activities there. (Morocco not only borders on both the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean, it contains two huge U. S. naval installations).

RABORN apparently is no happier with the CIA than his critics are with him. His wife has told friends that "Red wants out." The admiral, however, promised President Johnson when he accepted the task that he would stay for at least two years.

Raborn, bound by secrecy, has made no effort to defend himself against his attackers. It is possible that the feeling against him from within the CIA stems from a clash of personalities.

Yet the very fact that the attacks sound so authoritative and are so widespread weakens the effectiveness of both Raborn and his agency. It fosters public suspicion and breeds a lack of confidence in CIA projects that might even result in congressional demands that the CIA budget figures be made public.

John McCone, Raborn's predecessor, feared a similar adverse reaction when two Washington reporters published a book on the CIA. He called Random House, the book's publisher, to plead that it be withdrawn. The publisher refused.

"But you can't print this," McCone finally cried. "You don't understand. We're supposed to be SECRET."